



Agricultural Leaders OF MICHIGAN

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Agribusiness Friendliness Index gives low grades for affordable energy supplies in Michigan

New Colorado State University study highlights challenges Michigan farmers and agribusinesses face in powering their operations

LANSING – A new study released this week by Colorado State University (CSU) shows Michigan lagging behind many other states when it comes to reliable, affordable supplies of energy to power farms, processing facilities and agribusinesses.

“The bottom line is, we can do better here in Michigan to expand availability of affordable energy supplies for agriculture,” said **Jason Walther**, a potato grower and president of **Walther Farms**. “We’re ready to expand and grow into the future, and reliable energy infrastructure is a critical part of that equation.”

Last fall, **Walther** hosted members of the Michigan Public Service Commission (PSC) at one of his farms near Hemlock. During that visit he pointed out to PSC members the lack of three-phase power access to the farm, which forces farmers to use costly diesel fuel to power irrigation systems.

The new “Agribusiness Friendliness Index” from CSU assigned letter grades across a wide range of factors impacting agriculture and agribusiness. Notably, Michigan lagged behind in major categories related to energy and fuel availability. Michigan received the following scores in the report:

Diesel Fuel Prices: D – 40th in the nation.

Electricity Prices: D – 35th in the nation.

Natural Gas Prices: C – 25th in the nation.

Agricultural Leaders of Michigan, a coalition of agricultural, commodity and agribusiness leaders committed to promoting Michigan agriculture, emphasized the need for dependable, affordable fuel and electricity services to boost Michigan agriculture in future years.

“Michigan's dairy industry has taken a wide range of steps in recent years to save energy and produce more with less,” said **Ken Nobis**, president of the **Michigan Milk Producers Association**. “At the same time, there are real, bottom-line impacts when we don’t have access to affordable electricity and energy. Too often, rising energy costs in Michigan put our producers at a competitive disadvantage.”

In the study’s overall ranking, Michigan placed 25th in the nation for agribusiness-friendliness. Full Michigan scores from the CSU report [are available here](#). The full study, including categorical definitions and all state rankings, [is posted here](#).

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